

March 03/05/2020

TESTIMONY TO PUBLIC SAFETY AND SECURITY COMMITTEE.

IN SUPPORT OF SB235, AN ACT ESTABLISHING A CYBERSECURITY TASK FORCE

Senator Bradley, Representative Verrengia and honorable members of the Public Safety and Security Committee, I am writing in support SB 235.

Firstly, thank you, for raising this very significant Bill and seeing towards the passage of establishing a Cybersecurity Task Force. Which in the future shall be deemed timely and among the most prominent decisions for the people and entities in Connecticut, and to secure our public infrastructures.

I would also like to commend, the past endeavors of former Governor Malloy and his Cyber Czar Arthur House, that created the momentum and established pathways for us to cultivate, strengthen and develop a safer cyberspace in Connecticut.

My name is George Mathanool, a long-time resident in the City of Groton. I am a member and former Chair of the Town of Groton's Economic Development Commission. Currently, I am a Board Member, on two of Connecticut State's legislated public investment agencies, CT Next LLC and the Minority Business Initiative (MBI) - within the Department of Economic and Community Development.

Prior to above roles, my background for past 25+ years were in the private and investment banking realm and technology (FinTech and HiTech). The latter half of my career, since 1999, were primarily focused on identifying, investing and developing computer-data security (now called Cybersecurity) software solutions and hardware, across countries in Asia-Pacific, the E.U. and United States.

Concurrently as well, I had fostered initial developments and global recognition for some of the world's premier training and certifications of cybersecurity professionals; CISSP, CompTIA, CISM, GIAC, ISO 27001 etc., and oversaw formation of the title of CISO and its role within enterprises, in 2003 while as Executive Board in the Information System Security Association (ISSA).

The last 20+yrs information (cyber) security continues to evolve rapidly in complexity and be a major challenge for state and local governments, public awareness, adoption and development of new mitigation tools. Thereby introducing incrementally new vulnerabilities in civil context, that continues to grow conceivably ever more creative and dangerous against society.

Unfortunately, although everyone still continues to want more and better security, time committed to address cybersecurity continues to be taken as a 2<sup>nd</sup>-tier priority and under-funded due to balancing competing needs and limited budget to focus on tangible things, to show value right away like; new computers, network hardware and software. In contrast, unless something visceral happens(!) it's impossible to measure investment value of typical non-urgent and intangible cybersecurity.

Ongoing failures to modernize essentially results in technical debts for governments and companies, that only accrues sharply by waiting longer. Which shall become burdensome, consume time, costly system migration and difficult upgrades. Thereby costing so much more, increased liabilities and shallow implementations of cybersecurity.

It was just couple years ago the US Office of Personnel Management was hacked. The Chinese stole detailed data of every individual that has Security Clearance in the United States, including all of their Social Security numbers.

Typically, no one cares about having sprinklers, looks for Exit doors and insurance, unless there is a fire!

Quoting non-verbatim cyber-evangelist Bruce Schneier," the internet does like what many technologies does, it magnifies power in general. Then the powerless discovered the internet and now they have power! Like the hackers, the dissidents, the criminals, disenfranchised and marginal groups discovered the internet suddenly empowers them unlike ever before".

Since the 2019 US Congress passed its Defense Budget, Connecticut has begun a generational effort in defense-related innovations, research, prototyping and production of: space tech, jet engines for all branches, helicopters, nuclear submarines and innovations in air-drones and undersea-drones for civil, and naval. Connecticut's defense supply-chain clusters on all three corners are growing rapidly to fulfill DOD's orders.

Additionally, Connecticut is marching forward with Internet-Of-Things (IOT), e-Gov and adoption of 5G networks and ultra-fast internet for all.

However, with every aspect of the above two paragraphs; suburban Connecticut shall have numerous assailable and vulnerable surfaces, and infrastructures statewide. Some cybersecurity professionals have said, "there is no way to secure this because the attack surface is like a building with a zillion windows, doors, fire escapes".

The creations of a well-appointed membership of CT Cybersecurity Task Force is crucial now. Having effective response to cybersecurity would entail government agencies to co-ordinate and pool resources and capabilities, and have policymakers take a whole government approach to protect state and 169 local township governments.

Recommendations for your considerations;

- Review and incorporate ideas from California State's recent cybersecurity legislation (CA has the 5<sup>th</sup> largest economy in the world, its cybersecurity policies could be a template for Connecticut)
- Review and incorporate EU's General Data Privacy Regulation (GDPR). The GDPR impacts all EU citizens and corporation in the US, including US entities doing business in the EU. (Potentially as by that, Connecticut attracting European multi-national companies and individuals to relocate, for corporate and legal obligations).
- Establish a Connecticut Cybersecurity Thinktank, comprised of key CT universities (Univ. of New Haven, Univ. of Connecticut etc.) that have advanced cybersecurity resources and faculty, to review federal and global cybersecurity guidelines, policies and compliance for Connecticut.
- Establish a dedicated budget line for cybersecurity \*
- Establish an agile and independent Connecticut State's Cybersecurity Agency with broad mandates (perhaps overseen by Connecticut State Comptroller's Office for autonomy). \*\*

Thank you for this attention, Yours most sincerely,



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- \* <https://www.nascio.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/NASCIO-Dedicated-Cyber-Funding-2020.pdf>
- \*\* This agency staffed by diverse cyber-professionals, to deliver centralized oversight of state cybersecurity functions, works with public and private sector leads to protect and co-ordinate Connecticut's critical services, energy and business sectors. So that it engages with various industries and stakeholders to heighten cyber security awareness, industry development and outreach, to ensure the resilience and development of Connecticut's cyber security ecosystem.